



Breakfast

Breakfast: Why does it matter?

Preschoolers have an especially high level of energy and are growing and changing at a fast pace. Starting healthy eating habits, such as eating breakfast, is important to maintain their growth and activity levels.

Eating Breakfast Regularly...

- Prepares a child for learning.
- Improves behavior and attention.
- Improves diet quality.
- May help keep a healthy weight.

Tips for a Smart Start

- Be ready; plan and prepare breakfast the night before to save time in the morning.
- Be an example; eat breakfast with your children, to increase the chances of them growing up to be breakfast eaters.
- Be healthy; make it a goal to have three food groups at breakfast.
- Be flexible; breakfast can be a sandwich with milk or soup with cheese and crackers; there are no rules for what counts as breakfast food.
- Be creative; add leftover vegetables to scrambled eggs, fruit to cereal, or cook oatmeal with raisins and top with nuts.
- Be adventurous; if time allows, have children practice fine motor skills by pouring liquids from small pitchers or mixing ingredients together.



Image by Carrie Cai from Pixabay

Building Blocks of a Healthy Breakfast

Fruits and Vegetables provide important vitamins and minerals.

- Fresh or frozen fruits
- Canned fruits in their own juice
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Sliced vegetables
- 100% fruit and vegetable juice, if used, should be limited to 4-6 ounces/day

Protein foods, such as meats or eggs, nuts and beans, and dairy, also provide healthy fats and nutrients like vitamin D and calcium.

- Eggs
- Peanut or almond butter
- Beans
- Low fat yogurt, milk & cheese



iStock photo

Whole grains provide children with fiber so they feel full longer. Whole grains also help keep kids' hearts healthy.

- Whole-wheat toast
- Oatmeal
- Whole-wheat creamy style hot cereal
- Whole-grain cold cereals
- Cornbread
- Brown rice
- Whole-wheat muffins
- Granola bars
- Whole-grain pancakes
- Whole-grain tortillas